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1914

# Report of Conference of Missionaries and Missionary Boards Working in Mexico

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Held in Cincinnati, Ohio  
June 30 — July 1, 1914

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# Conference of Missionaries and Missionary Boards Working in Mexico

JUNE 30-JULY 1, 1914

In view of the fact that almost all the missionaries at work in Mexico were present in the United States and that they and the Boards which they represented felt the urgent need of common counsel that the work might be reorganized in the best possible way after the disturbances of the last two years, a Conference on Missions in Mexico was called by a Committee representing the standing committee of the Missionary Boards at work in Latin America. The Conference convened in the rooms of the Methodist Book Concern, Cincinnati, on June 30th, 1914, at 10 A. M.

The following delegates were present:

## *BAPTIST NORTH:*

Rev. Geo. H. Brewer, Dr. L. C. Barnes.  
Woman's Board: Mrs. Frank J. Miller.

## *BIBLE SOCIETY:*

Mrs. F. S. Hamilton.

## *CONGREGATIONAL:*

Dr. John Howland, Rev. Louis B. Fritts,  
Rev. E. F. Bell; Woman's Board: Miss  
Kate G. Lamson, Miss M. D. Wingate,  
Miss Mary F. Long.

## *DISCIPLES:*

Christian Woman's Board: Dr. A. McLean,  
Pres. C. T. Paul, Miss Elma Irelan, Dr.  
Ida W. Harrison, Mrs. Effie L. Cunning-

ham, Mrs. Ellie K. Payne, Prof. John G. McGavran, Dr. H. C. Hurd, Dr. F. M. Rains, Sec. S. J. Corey.

*FRIENDS:*

E. Gurney Hill, R. Solomon Tice, Mrs. E. P. Trueblood, Miss Nancy Lee, Miss Edith Tebbetts.

*EPISCOPAL:*

Mr. John W. Wood.

*METHODIST EPISCOPAL:*

Bishop F. J. McConnell, Dr. John W. Butler, Rev. J. P. Houser, Rev. F. F. Wolfe, Dr. W. F. Oldham, Rev. R. A. Carhart, J. N. Gambel.

Woman's Board: Miss C. J. Carnahan, Miss C. Butler, Miss H. L. Ayers, Mrs. R. L. Thomas, Miss Helen Hewett, Mrs. J. P. Houser, Miss Grace Hollister, Miss Julia A. Knox.

*METHODIST EPISCOPAL (South):*

Bishop W. R. Lambuth, Dr. Edward F. Cook, Miss Belle H. Bennett, Miss Mabel Head, Miss Esther Case, Miss L. Roberts, Miss H. L. Gibson, Dr. G. B. Winton, Miss N. E. Holding, Rev. N. E. Joyner, Rev. F. S. Onderdonk, Dr. J. M. Moore.

*PRESBYTERIAN (North):*

Dr. Wm. Wallace, Rev. W. E. Vanderbilt, Rev. Chas. Petran, Mr. R. E. Speer, Dr. A. W. Halsey, Prof. R. A. Brown; Woman's Boards: Mrs. W. E. Waters, Miss Jennie Wheeler.

*PRESBYTERIAN (South):*

Dr. E. W. Smith, Rev. W. A. Ross.

Y. M. C. A.:

Mr. A. E. Turner.

Bishop W. R. Lambuth, of the Southern Methodist Church, was chosen Chairman of the Conference and the Rev. E. F. Bell and the Rev. G. H. Brewer, Secretaries.

The conference lasted for two days and in the spirit of prayer, in the spirit of unity, and in the spirit of hope and courage which prevailed, it was felt by all those present to have been one of the most notable gatherings they had ever attended, and as they have looked back over it since, it seems to them that it marked the beginning of a new era of true missionary co-operation and efficiency of administration.

Maps and tabular statements had been prepared furnishing each delegate with information regarding all the work which the Missions were doing in Mexico. After a full preliminary discussion, the five following Committees were constituted, each made up of representatives of all the missionary agencies composing the conference, and every member of the conference being assigned to work on one or more of these committees:

- (1) Press and Publications — Chairman, Rev. G. B. Winton, D.D.
- (2) Theological, Educational and Training Schools — Chairman, Rev. William Wallace, D.D.
- (3) General Committee on Education— Chairman, Rev. John Howland, D.D.
- (4) Territorial Occupation — Chairman, Rev. John W. Butler, D.D.

- (5) General Committee on Mexico to consider all questions not included in the above four—Chairman, Bishop W. F. Oldham, D.D.

These Committees, meeting separately, studied thoroughly the subjects assigned to them; then the whole conference re-convened and the various reports were taken up one by one, fully discussed and amended, and then adopted as follows:

### I.—COMMITTEE ON PRESS AND PUBLICATIONS

Present conditions in Mexico make opportune a readjustment of the work producing an evangelical literature in the Spanish language. Every indication points to a greatly increased demand for such literature in the immediate future. The newly and deeply aroused minds of the people of that country will insist upon something to feed on. The pabulum which is supplied them, the reading matter which is disseminated through the country, will have much to do with the future welfare of that Republic. Here is a wide open door for the Gospel.

In the past our activities in producing Christian literature, conducted as they have been largely along independent lines, have been attended by much duplication of effort and consequent waste of resources. This is not necessary. In perhaps no other department of our work is co-operation so easy as in this.

The production of literature involves two branches of labor, the editorial and the manufacturing. The literature itself also nat-

urally falls into two classes, books and periodicals, the permanent and the temporary—including tracts and leaflets with the periodicals. In no department of this work is co-operation impossible. In some, as for example in manufacturing, it may perhaps be accounted difficult. Yet we believe that the difficulties involved even in the community ownership and direction of publishing plants are by no means insurmountable. Certainly there should be no serious obstacle in the department of editing. Our denominational beliefs are sufficiently near to identity with each other and the taste of Mexican readers so indifferent to the distinctions which may still persist among us, that authorship and supervision by those of one Church for readers of another offer no obstacles that need give us pause.

In view of these considerations your Committee on Literature and the Press offer for your approval the following recommendations:

1. That a Joint Depository and Selling Agency be established at Mexico City.
2. That all the present Church papers be united into one.
3. That an illustrated young people's paper be established.
4. That a joint publishing plant be established in Mexico City on the basis of a proportionate sharing of expenses by the denominations. This enterprise we should expect to be under the direction and control of a joint board, the members to be named by the co-operating churches.

## II.—COMMITTEE ON GENERAL EDUCATION.

This Committee recommends:

1. That Domestic and Manual Arts be taught in all schools, as far as practicable.
2. That an Elementary School be carried on, as far as possible, wherever there is an organized congregation, and in the larger places that there be added the fifth and sixth grades, so that pupils may be prepared for admission into the higher institutions.
3. That there be High Schools established, at least one for boys and one for girls, within each Mission territory. The course of study in these schools should include vocational training.
4. That the various Missions working in Mexico appoint a Committee on Education, the committee to be composed of one person representing each Mission, to be appointed as the Mission shall determine. It shall be the duty of this Committee to study the question of education and make suggestions for the curriculum, conduct and correlation of our schools.
5. The consolidation of the higher grades of the primary schools in such places as are occupied by two or more denominations.
6. That a Union College for men and women be established at some central place, and that in connection with



this college there be established Normal, Industrial and Kindergarten Training Schools.

7. The Committee also recommends the consolidation of Normal Schools where two or more exist in one center, and that where only one Normal School exists, the question of its continuance or discontinuance be left to the discretion of the denomination concerned.
8. The Committee recommends the appointment of a Committee on Ways and Means for the founding of the College and affiliated schools, this committee to be composed of two members representing each denomination, to be appointed as each board or denomination may determine.
9. The Committee recommends the appointment, either by the Committee on Ways and Means or by the Boards, of a financial agent for the Union College and affiliated schools.

### III.—COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION.

Your Committee found that the way had been prepared for a unanimous report in favor of the establishment of a Union Theological School and of its feasibility in the immediate future; not only has it been recommended by the Committee on Cooperation representing the principal Boards working in Mexico, but it represents a widespread and growing sentiment among missionaries and native workers in that land.

The practicability of such an institution has been amply demonstrated in other mission fields. In view of the difficulty involved in properly financing and staffing a second Theological School with any available resources, the Committee suggests that the consideration of this project be deferred to a later period.

The Committee is therefore glad to report that the following recommendations have been drawn up with absolute unanimity and represent the desires of missionaries working in connection with the following churches: Methodist Episcopal, Methodist Episcopal (South), Northern Baptist Convention, Presbyterian North, Presbyterian South, Associated Reformed Presbyterian, Congregationalists, Disciples and Friends. We recommend:

1. The establishment of a Bible Institute and Theological Seminary to be known as The Bible Institute and Theological Seminary of the Evangelical Church in Mexico (Instituto Biblico y Seminario Teologico de la Iglesia Evangelica en Mexico).
2. This school shall be under the control of the Board of Directors, elected by Missions or Churches that co-operate in its support.
3. The Board of Directors shall have control of the property and funds contributed to the support of the school, shall elect the members of the faculty with the approval of the various missions or churches, and shall discharge the

various duties that ordinarily correspond to the Directorship of such institutions.

4. The School is expected to furnish:
  - (a) A complete course of Theological Instruction for candidates preparing for the ministry.
  - (b) Courses in Bible, music, methods of church work, for those who wish to serve as Evangelists, Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A. secretaries, deaconesses,—in general, for lay workers of both sexes.
5. Opportunities shall be provided for instruction in the distinctive principles of the co-operating organizations.
6. We recommend that the School be located in Coyoacan, D. F., and that arrangements be made for the purchase of the property now used by the Presbyterian Mission for its College and Seminary.
7. We recommend the appointment of a Continuation Committee which shall have the matter under its immediate responsibility and correspond with the Boards and Missions.

#### IV.—COMMITTEE ON TERRITORIAL OCCUPATION.

The Committee on Territorial Occupation brought in a revised plan for the division of the country, including the following resolutions regarding missions at work in the two states of Nuevo Leon and Tamaulipas:

It is recommended that the State of Nuevo Leon be granted to the Northern Baptists, with the exception of the present holdings of the Disciples in the City of Monterey and the holdings of the Southern Presbyterians in this State, and the future conduct of these missions to be subject to future adjustment by the Boards concerned.

It is further recommended that in view of special conditions in the State of Tamaulipas the following plan be approved covering the work already established in that State:

In municipalities of 10,000 people or less where more than one Board is at work, all are to withdraw with the exception of one Board, priority of occupation to be given first consideration.

In municipalities of 20,000 people, when occupied by more than two Boards, all are to withdraw with the exception of two, priority of occupation to be given first consideration.

In all new territory assigned to a single Board, all other Boards are to refrain from entering.

On the understanding that these resolutions met with the approval of the Conference, the following report of the Committee as a whole was accepted and adopted:

1. The Committee is deeply impressed with the inadequacy of the missionary force available for the evangelistic, educational and other forms of missionary effort through which we are seeking to help Mexico. There is an average of

one foreign missionary, including wives, to 70,000 of the population. Fourteen of the States of Mexico, with a population of over 5,000,000, or one-third of the entire population, have no resident foreign missionaries.

2. The Committee believes that there should be a great increase of the missionary staff to co-operate with the loyal and capable ministers of the Mexican churches and that as soon as possible the force of missionaries should be increased at least fifty per cent.
3. The Committee believes also that there might be a more effective distribution of the present missionary forces than that which has come about in the natural development of the work hitherto. In some states there is one missionary to each 12,000 people and in others there is not one to more than 1,000,000. There are 39 mission high schools in 15 states while the other 15 states, with a population of 6,000,000, have no such institutions at work for their people. We would accordingly urge upon each agency at work in Mexico the earnest consideration of the location and distribution of its forces, so as to avoid duplication and overlapping and to secure the occupation and evangelization of the entire field.
4. It is not within the province or power of the Committee to indicate any withdrawals or transfers which might be

made by particular agencies and we recognize that there are denominations which do not feel free to share in any plan of territorial assignment of responsibility; but we recommend that in the development of the work in Mexico and in the effort to provide for the occupation of the whole country the following denominations be regarded by this Conference as primarily responsible for the occupation and missionary cultivation of the states indicated:

*CONGREGATIONALISTS:*

Chihuahua, Sinaloa, as far South as Sinaloa River, Sonora and Lower California.

*BAPTISTS:*

Coahuila, Nueva Leon, Zacatecas, Durango, Mexico, Federal District and Aguas Calientes.

*DISCIPLES:*

Coahuila (from Piedras Negras south along the line of International R. R. to Monterey and to Torreon whence north to Jimenez including Sierra Mojada), Nueva Leon.

*FRIENDS AND SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIANS:*

San Luis Potosi, Tamaulipas, Nueva Leon.

*METHODISTS:*

San Luis Potosi, Guanajuato, Jalisco, Colima, Mexico, Federal District, Hidalgo, Puebla, Queretaro, Tlaxcala, Michoacan, Tepic and Sinaloa as far north as Sinaloa River.

## ASSOCIATED REFORMED PRESBY- TERIANS:

Tamaulipas, Vera Cruz and Eastern San Luis Potosi.

### *PRESBYTERIANS (North):*

Mexico, Federal District, Morelos, Vera Cruz, Campeche, Guerrero, Oaxaca, Chiapas, Tabasco and Yucatan.

5. The Committee believes that the earnest effort of the denominations named to care for the territory designated will make possible a more efficient development of the work in each part of the country as well as the occupation of the entire field. Special responsibility for contiguous territory will enable the missions to arrange for regular and frequent conferences and institutes of workers, both preachers and teachers, and will prepare the way for such an intensive development of their work and such harmony of relationships as will best advance the cause which we all seek to serve of the evangelization of the whole land and the moral and spiritual progress of its people.

## V.—GENERAL COMMITTEE.

1. We recommend that the Committee calling this conference be requested to appoint a committee of five, of whom four shall be missionaries at work in Mexico, to whom shall be assigned the task of preparing a paper to be entitled "A Message to the Mexican People." We suggest that

there be added, as Chairman of this Committee, Mr. Robert E. Speer, the Chairman of the present Committee of Arrangements of this Conference. This Message to the Mexican people should set forth in brief but comprehensive language the fundamentals of the Christian faith and life as held throughout the centuries, laying special emphasis on general principles of Christian living growing out of a living union between the individual and Jesus Christ as Divine Lord and Master. We would call especial attention to the admirable paper on this general theme issued by the Christian Literature Society of Japan and signed by 700 Japanese missionaries and circulated broadcast over the land. While the message to the Mexican people must of necessity be adapted to the present needs and conditions of the Mexicans, we believe that the message to the Japanese people contains the substance of what should be inserted in the message to the Mexican people, with possibly particular emphasis being placed on the relation of the individual to society and the state. While this message should be simple, yet it should be made very clear that it is our profound conviction that only through personal discipleship to Jesus Christ are the moral and spiritual problems of Mexico both individual and national to be solved and the expectations of every heart satisfied. We would further recommend that great care be taken in the translation into the Spanish language of this message and that the best native help available be secured. The Committee is of the opinion



that the money to defray the expense of issuing and distributing this message can be raised by private subscription.

## 2.—THE MEXICAN CHURCH—ITS LIFE AND GROWTH.

### *a. Name*

The various Evangelical bodies of Christians at work in Mexico, while retaining each its own denominational heritage, yet agree in the great doctrines of their holy faith; and, to set forth this basal unity, they desire that henceforth they may all be known by the Common Appellation of "The Evangelical Church of Mexico" with the special name of the denomination following this common designation in a bracket, when necessary, *e. g.*, "The Evangelical Church of Mexico" (Presbyterian). When statistics are used, it is advised that whenever possible and convenient the whole body of the Evangelical Church be counted with the number of the special denomination following in a bracket, *e. g.*, Sunday School Scholars "Evangelical Church of Mexico" 10,000 (Methodist Episcopal 4,000).

### *b. Interchange of Membership.*

In view of the proposed distribution of territory the probable transfer of membership from one communion to another and the constant moving of the people of Mexico from one province to another, your committee recommends the following form of letter to be used between the churches making the transfer:

This certifies that.....is a member in good and regular standing of the Evangelical Church (.....) in..... and we earnestly commend.....to the fellowship and Christian watchful care of .....Church.

..... Pastor  
..... Church

### *c. Self-Support.*

Realizing that the permanence of a congregation and its thorough establishment in the Christian faith is most surely indicated by its becoming entirely self-supporting and realizing that the future life and growth of the Evangelical Church in Mexico wait upon the time when the native members shall be able to stand by themselves, we recommend that the strongest possible emphasis be placed upon the matter of self-support, that all existing congregations be brought to that standard as soon as possible and that all new congregations be started only upon the basis of a diminishing scale of subsidies.

### *d. A Month of Evangelism.*

We recommend to the missionaries and native Christian leaders of Mexico the appointment as soon as practicable of one month each year to be observed as a simultaneous and nation-wide season of special prayer and evangelistic effort.

### *e. Promotion of Education.*

We recommend to Evangelical Christians in Mexico the observance of a period each

year when work shall be done throughout the country for the promotion of Christian education and for the presentation of the need of community betterment and the practicable ways by which it may be attained.

### 3.—MEDICAL MISSIONS.

Believing that the long period of strife and Civil War in Mexico will leave behind it a country in great need of medical advice and help and that Christian service is never more spiritually serviceable than when conveyed by the kindly ministrations of medical missionaries, your Committee urges that special emphasis be placed on increasing the number of medical missionaries and the establishing of well equipped hospitals at strategic points, not only for the relief of the suffering, but for the training of native physicians and nurses who will thus be enabled to make their contribution to the health and social uplift of their countrymen.

### 4.—MISSIONARIES AND THEIR PREPARATIONS.

The large areas in Mexico yet unoccupied and the striking conditions under which we shall re-enter our work in that troubled land, call for special consideration of the qualifications and training needed by all new missionaries. Mexico calls for the best we have, for men and women of the finest preparation and of the best native quality, of tact, insight, sympathy and a ready perception of the possibilities that lie concealed in peoples of other training and surround-

ings. They will be called upon to deal with difficult and delicate questions and to exhibit large constructive ability in situations of which their home experience gives them no knowledge. Above all else should they be men of abiding faith in God and filled with the love which constrains a man to lay down his life for his friends.

### *Language Study.*

It is recommended that no missionary be permitted to reach his station, to engage in actual work, without such previous preparation in the Spanish language as will enable him to use it with a fair degree of proficiency. At least six months of distinctive language study, either in this country or in Mexico should be required of each missionary before beginning work.

### 5.—HOME PUBLICITY.

That the representatives of the denominations attending this Conference publish in the various church papers and in the secular press information concerning the proposed program of Missions in Mexico, based on the official Minutes of this Conference, setting forth especially the reasonableness of a union or correlation of the work of the various churches in that country. These published articles should emphasize the enlargement of work made possible by this method, the spirit of the Master shown in adopting it and the power that will come to the churches by thus answering His prayer that we may all be one.

## 6.—PERMANENT FIELD COMMITTEE

It is the judgment of this General Committee that there shall be constituted a permanent committee of Reference and Counsel on the field. This committee to be composed of missionaries representing the several denominations affiliating in the proposed co-operative movement in Mexico.

We recommend that each Board entering into the plan be requested to appoint one representative and one alternate.

We recommend that the duties of this committee shall be:

- (a) To carry into effect as far as possible the plans of co-operation and unity, to consider all proposed interdenominational policies and to make recommendations to the Boards concerned.
- (b) To consider all further questions of co-operation and unity and to make recommendations to the Boards concerned.
- (c) To arbitrate differences which may arise between church bodies in putting into effect policies of co-operation and unity when requested.
- (d) To consider all matters of common interest which may be referred to it for counsel or direction.
- (e) To promote and oversee the creation of a Christian literature suitable to the needs of the people and to secure its distribution.
- (f) That the securing of adequate titles to all Mission properties be made the special care of this Committee.

Mr. John W. Wood gave the following statement with reference to the reason why the Episcopal Church could not officially co-operate, though deeply concerned in the vital work of the missions in Mexico:

"It has been a satisfaction to be here and to note the spirit of cordial co-operation expressed in the conference. On several of the most important questions I have refrained from speaking or acting because they dealt with subjects upon which the Board of Missions of the Episcopal Church is not prepared to act. For instance, in the matter of territorial occupation, I have explained to the committee, through one of its members, that our Board has nothing to do with territorial jurisdiction. Jurisdiction is determined by our General Convention and is committed to the bishop elected for the field. The General Convention is, therefore, the only body in our Church which could deal with this subject. Moreover one of the most important features of the work of the Episcopal Church is ministration to the English-speaking residents in Mexico. Prior to its revolutionary troubles this work was carried on in widely scattered parts of the country from the Isthmus of Tehuantepec to the extreme north. With the coming of peace and the return of foreigners, this work, it is expected, will be re-established. For similar reasons our Board does not find it practicable to agree to Union Educational Institutions or to advise our mission to discontinue the publication of the papers issued for many years by the Mexican Church. So far as the name by which the non-Roman

Christian organizations in Mexico shall be known, I would point out that our Mexican congregations several years ago, by their own action, selected the name 'Iglesia Catolica Mexicana.' That name has been recognized by our General Convention and our Board would not feel free to recommend that the Mexican Church should adopt any other name. In spite of these very large reservations, I hope the members of the Conference will believe that the Episcopal Church is deeply concerned about the vital subject of Christian reunion and desires to share in co-operative efforts whenever practicable."

*It was VOTED* that in transmitting to the Board of Missions of the Episcopal Church the recommendations of this Conference there should be added a request that the matters contained in the recommendations, over which the Board of Missions has no control, be laid by it before the General Convention of 1916.

It was recognized by all that it was indispensable that the plans should have the approval and support of the leaders, both men and women, in the Mexican churches, and the representatives of each Board were requested not only to lay the report of the conference before their own Boards and their own home churches, but also to take up the various questions involved with the Mexican churches.

It is desired that all who read this report should join by prayer and active effort in the work of carrying out the plans to which the delegates of this conference were led.

